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Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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Replies received from Member States

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[21 July 2000]

1. The implementation of unilateral coercive measures that are not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations is one of the worst and most serious violations of human rights that can be committed against the populations of the countries affected. These measures are used with the intention of restricting the right to self-determination of the peoples of developing countries and are generally implemented as a key part of the strategies for dominance of the main imperialist Powers, particularly by the Government of the United States of America, which is applying economic sanctions to 35 countries, to which can be added the sanctions taken by that country's individual states and at the local level against a further 18 countries.

2. Cuba has been the victim of a criminal and genocidal blockade imposed by the United States for 40 years, which has been roundly and overwhelmingly condemned by States Members of the United Nations at the General Assembly. The damage to the Cuban people has been fully documented by the Cuban authorities and published in the Secretary-General's reports on the subject. However, the documentation on the impact of the blockade imposed on the Cuban people by the Government of the United States is not limited to that submitted by the Cuban authorities.

3. On 3 January 2000, a number of social, community and student organizations from Cuban civil society lodged a claim with the People's Provincial Court of the City of Havana against the Government of the United States for economic damage caused to Cuba, claiming $121 billion in reparation and compensation for the Cuban people (see A/55/316). During the judicial proceedings dealing with this claim, hundreds of witnesses and pieces of evidence were produced, enabling the Court, with full respect for due process, to find that the Government of the United States was liable under civil law for the unlawful acts carried out against Cuba and to order it to pay reparation or compensation to the Cuban people in the aforementioned amount.

4. The strategic objective of the blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba has been nothing less than the destruction of the process of political, social and economic changes undertaken by the Cuban people in the exercise of their right to self-determination. To that end, the Government of the United States and its top leaders in nine successive presidential administrations, together with members of the legislative branch, civil servants and official or unofficial staff of that Government, have resorted to every kind of political pressure, attempts at diplomatic isolation, propaganda activities, encouraging defections and illegal emigration, spying, economic warfare and various forms of physical aggression, including subversion, terrorist activities and sabotage, biological warfare, encouraging armed groups to fight against our country, orchestrating hundreds of plans to assassinate the top leaders of the Revolution, military harassment, the threat of nuclear extermination and even a direct attack by an army of mercenaries.

5. For almost 40 years, successive administrations of the Government of the United States have applied a policy of systematic economic aggression against Cuba. That policy, in its scope and persistence, in the involvement in it at the highest level of the executive and legislative branches of the United States Government, in its use of a vast arsenal of economic and political tools as weapons of aggression, and in the extraterritorial nature of its provisions and their application to third countries, and with the unfulfilled strategic aim of breaking down the Cuban people's resistance by trying to force it, through poverty, want, sickness and hunger, to abandon the socio-economic and political system adopted by it in a free and sovereign manner with the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, is a policy of economic aggression which is not limited to a simple embargo applicable to bilateral economic relations but which actually amounts to economic warfare. The economic blockade is applied in blatant violation of the people's right to life, well-being and development without distinction as to age, sex, race, religious beliefs, social status or political ideas.

6. The will of the international community continues to be ignored by the United States in its policy of blockading Cuba. Far from ending the blockade, every year the United States adopts new laws, measures and provisions to tighten it. Cuba is of the unshakeable conviction that, in the present international situation, it is more than ever necessary for the international community to continue to strongly condemn the use of such practices and to take urgent action to ensure effective compliance with the decisions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights.

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

[Original: Arabic]

1. All categories of unilateral coercive measures, such as trade restrictions, embargoes, blockades, the freezing of accounts, the use of human rights by a number of advanced countries as a condition for granting assistance to the developing countries in order to obtain from them the subordination of the exercise of their sovereign rights, constitute a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.

2. Sanctions are also said to inhibit the strengthening of trade relations among States and have an adverse impact on the right to development of developing countries, which suffer heavy economic losses from restrictions imposed on exports, impediments to development assistance and the freezing of their assets abroad. This, in turn, is reported to impede the full realization of all the human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the relevant international instruments.

3. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya attaches great importance to General Assembly resolution 54/172 and to the many other decisions and declarations adopted by the United Nations system and regional organizations, which call for an immediate end to unilateral coercive measures as an instrument of political and economic duress, and reject the promulgation by any State of legislation with extraterritorial effects as well as the imposition of sanctions on companies and individuals belonging to other States. The international community has called for the non-recognition of such legislation since it constitutes a flagrant violation of State sovereignty, arrant

interference in the internal affairs of States and a clear violation of their right to the economic and social development of their choice.

4. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya strongly condemns the refusal of one major Power to respect the will of the international community, its persistent imposition of coercive measures on some developing countries, including the Jamahiriya and its unilateral promulgation of legislation with extraterritorial effects, such as the D'Amato Act and the Helms-Burton Act, thereby challenging United Nations resolutions that call for the revocation of such legislation and other coercive measures because of their harmful impact on the enjoyment of all human rights, particularly the right to development, food and health care. It calls on the international community to continue its strong opposition to all kinds of coercive measures and to take urgent steps to ensure their definitive revocation.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[14 August 2000]

1. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic approves General Assembly resolution 54/172 of 17 December 1999 on human rights and unilateral coercive measures.

2. The Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, in 1998 (see A/53/667-S/1998/1071), the Eighth Session of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held at Tehran in 1997 (see S/1998/76, S/1998/77 and S/1998/78) and the South Summit held at Havana in April 2000, took note of those measures and considered them contradictory to the standards of international law and the purposes and principles of the United Nations.